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585 own and a sleeping-hide, a brush, and a couple of gourds for ablu-
[591] tions. When her husband comes to visit her in her father's home-
stead he sleeps with her in this hut. She continues in all other respects to lead the life she led before marriage, and after her husband's visits she hangs up the hide and domestic utensils and sleeps with her unmarried sisters. On these visits her husband stays at a neighbouring homestead as he cannot eat in the home of his parents-in-law and ought not to be seen there at all. When someone tells the wife that her husband has come, so that she may prepare for him, she feigns annoyance or lack of interest, pretending that she is still unmarried, a shyness she keeps up with third persons, though she is at ease when alone with her husband. When everyone is asleep he visits her and spends the night with her, leaving before any of the bride's people are about. Her parents are supposed to know nothing of his visits, though, of course, they know all about his movements, and it is even said that his mother-in-law may rise especially early and squint through a crack in the door of her hut to see him depart. I was told that should he oversleep and his mother-in-law see his spears outside her daughter's hut, she makes them forfeit, and he would be ashamed to ask for them back. It is not till a child has been born that the husband is accepted by his wife's people as one of themselves. He is then the father of their daughter's child and through the child has a kind of kinship with them. Till this happens the husband continues to lead the life he lived before marriage, a bachelor life with his younger brothers in their father's byre. His wife visits him only on rare occasions and for a formal purpose, as when, at harvest time, she brings him coverings she has made for the grain on the drying-platforms, or when she takes him a bundle of well-cooked porridge made from the first millet of the year—a pretty custom known as *puthene kuan*, honouring with porridge.

● 842 All are equally anxious for a child to be born, the husband and wife because they want a son, and the wife's parents and kin because they cannot, without risking complications, dispose of the cattle of the marriage till a first-born completes the union. Those whose daughters they might wish to marry would not be happy about accepting such cattle as bridewealth in case they had suddenly to be returned to the husband. When a child is born the
853 mother remains with her parents till she has weaned it. This is a
591 suitable regulation, because after bridewealth has been paid the
862

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588 legal family in opposition to this natural family and the genitor
594 can become pater to the children. If the woman leaves him, his position is then equivalent to that of a man who has divorced his wife, but has left part of the bridewealth with her family to retain his children.

842 It is clear from the facts I have recorded that Nuer do not attach great importance to physiological paternity. Men prefer to beget their own sons, but it is not ignominious to nurture children begotten by others. Nuer pay little regard to the manner of begetting so long as the legal fatherhood of the child is well established. This is particularly evident in their ideas about adultery, and a consideration of them will serve also to emphasize that Nuer acknowledge social and mystical links between a child and his natural father.

837 It is adultery if a man has relations with another man's wife, including ghost-wives and leviratic wives. I was struck among the Nuer both by the frequency of adultery and the infrequency of quarrels or even talk about it. Nuer seem to treat the matter lightheartedly, and not to be at all ashamed of their adulteries. In speaking of adultery, it is the risk of being speared or clubbed if caught in the act, or having to pay compensation to the husband if he finds out what is happening, that they bring to the fore. Adultery in their eyes is an illegal but not an immoral act.

684 The legal position is as follows. When a husband has proof of his wife's infidelity he may claim compensation of six cows and, as the adulterer's kin are unlikely to support him, the husband will probably, if the two men live in the same district, receive the cattle. Nuer regard adultery in the husband's home as a more serious offence than adultery in the bush because they believe that it is more likely to cause the husband sickness. Adultery is a double damage: it is an infringement of rights and it can injure the husband's health.

If after the six head of cattle have been paid a healthy child is born of the adulterous congress, five of them must be returned, because 'the cattle and the child must not meet in one place'. Otherwise, the cattle paid in compensation partake of the nature of a legitimatization fee and hence give the genitor a claim on the child. The birth of a child seems to be thought to change the compensation for an adultery (*ruok*) into a fee for legitimatizing a child (also *ruok*). I only discovered this convention after I had left

595 in the child from the time the mother leaves her hut after bearing him. The father's other wives, his brothers and their wives, and other kinsmen and affines of the father if they live near him, take

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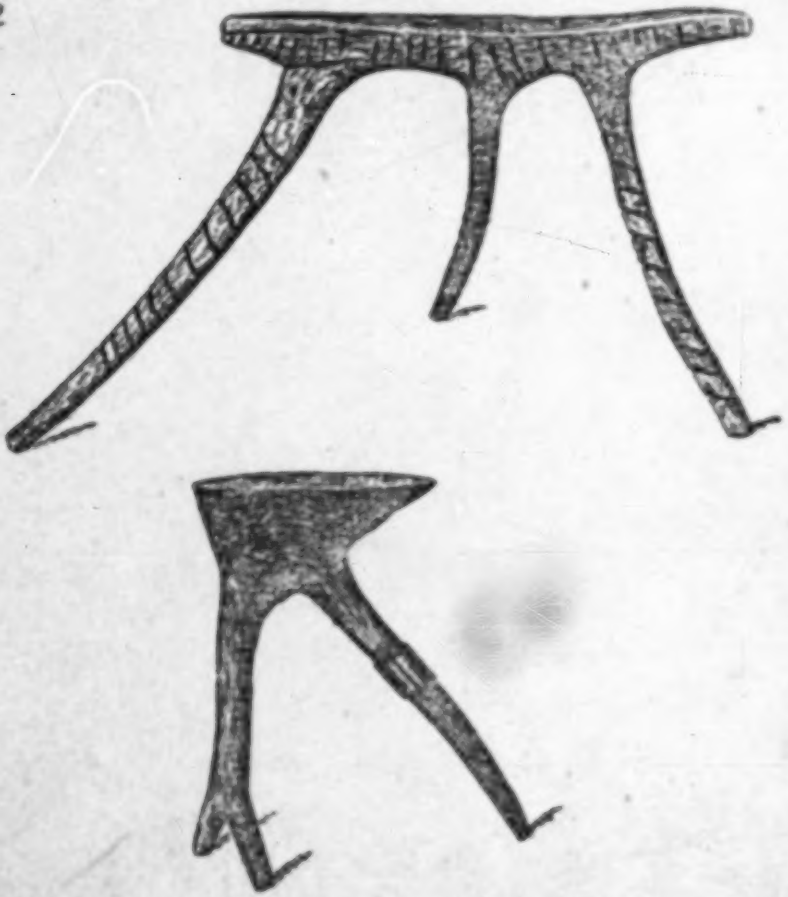

Wooden neck-rests or pillows

595 frequent notice of the child, nurse him, talk to him, and make him understand that they belong to him. If he is an eldest child and is brought up in his maternal grandparents' home, he will have the same close relations with corresponding persons there.

842 Nuer welcome children and hope when they marry that their wives will be fertile.

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868 Boys come under their father's direction. He and the other men of
543 the kraal see that they carry out their duties in the care of flocks and herds. Boys learn from their elder brothers and cousins how to fish, hunt, cultivate, dance, flirt, and engage in the other activities of men. A boy can see the stages of his life before him—initiation, courtship, marriage, and the starting of a family and home—and he realizes even in childhood that these stages are bound up with his father's herd, and that he and his brothers have a common interest with their father in the herd. It is very noticeable that when boys talk about the cattle it is in reference to marriage and when girls talk about them it is in reference to milk.

593 In my experience, it is only when a father is selfish or extravagant in his use of the herd that, even when his sons are men, any serious disagreement is likely to arise between them. Even then, young men submit to their father's indiscretions. If they may show their disapproval by going to stay with relatives for a time they say little, partly, no doubt, because they fear a father's anger and curse, but chiefly, I believe, because, in spite of faults, they love and respect their fathers. Though relations between a father and his son may be strained, the sorrow and anxiety of the son should his father fall sick are most apparent. Nuer say that should father and son fail altogether to agree the son may go to live permanently with his maternal uncle, but this would be a most serious offence in the eyes of Nuer, being *dakene mar*, the breaking of kinship. I have never known it happen.

Boys treat their mothers with affection, though they are offhanded with them and are sometimes rude to them. When they are approaching the threshold of manhood a feeling of male superiority seems to affect their attitude to their mothers. I was told that a youth would never interfere on his mother's behalf should his father be angry with her, though should the father wish to beat her the son would not reveal her hiding-place lest she
● [842] should curse him. A mother's curse prevents a man from begetting male children. Fear of it was the reason given me for the care Nuer take of their mothers when they are very old, carrying them on their shoulders from village to camp and from camp to village, but, here again, I think that natural affection is a stronger motive.

My observations of the relations between parents and children do not permit me to develop the subject beyond such general impressions as I have given. I would like, however, to draw attention

4: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1948 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

distinction does not apply to animals killed by the bride's family and kin or which have been disposed of by them and have died outside their kraals, for these count as bridewealth before, as well as after, the consummation. On the other hand, any calves the cattle may bear before this ceremony count as original bridewealth and not as increment. Likewise, if the incomplete union is broken before the *mut*, all the cattle and their increase, including those which have died, must be returned, whereas in the event of divorce after the *mut* the bride's people do not have to return animals which have died a natural death in their own kraals, and they have a right to retain two cows, the *yang yani* and the *yang miemar*, the cow of the skirt, the mark of married status, and the cow of the hair, which is shaved off the bride's head at the consummation. 585

It is the *mut* therefore which makes the union a contract. Consequently, it occasionally happens, when people are anxious to expedite the marriage, that the consummation takes place before the wedding. I heard it suggested that this should be done in the case of a youth who had been speared and could not take the bridegroom's usual part in weddings, and although it was decided to hold the wedding first, with the bridegroom as a spectator, no one suggested that in the circumstances a reversal of the ceremonies would have been improper. Mrs. Smith, of the American Mission, told me of a case of an elderly man who, desiring to marry a girl with the approval of her family but against her own wishes, prevailed on her relatives to rush her through the *mut*, leaving the wedding to be held later.

The day of the consummation has to be fixed in advance because beer has to be brewed for the visitors. In the early morning the bridegroom goes with a company of the youths of his village to fetch the bride, his womenfolk remaining behind to prepare for their visitors. They chant on the way, for this is a happy occasion for the village. Sometimes they find on arrival that the bride's mother has prepared beer for them. They have to ask her permission to take her daughter away and she asks them for presents before she gives it, such things as a spear, armlets, a pipe, and tobacco. The young men promise to give her what she asks for and depart, escorting the bride and her girl companions, who have oiled and decked themselves with ornaments for the ceremony. They go chanting to the bridegroom's village, one of the poems often being a composition of the bride in honour of her future husband, and there is much horseplay between the sexes. When they near the village the young men go ahead and the girls are met by the youths of the village who bring them into the kraal where they serenade the bridegroom's mother with poems outside her hut. The ceremony is mostly a female affair, the men looking on.

After a while a kinsman of the bridegroom places a tethering-cord across the inner threshold of one of the huts and the bridegroom crawls over it, followed by the bride, the best man, and a special girl friend of the bride. This action is said to make the marriage fruitful. Then, towards evening, takes place the rite of consummation, though it must be said again that there is no invariable order of events in these ceremonies and no fixed time-table. The bride retires to a hut wearing a special goatskin cap and here the bridegroom joins her. His age-mates seek him out and say to him: 'Come now, let the people go to bed, come and loosen the bride's girdle.' He is bashful and gets the business over as quickly and inconspicuously as he can. He enters the hut and gives his bride a cut with a switch and seizes her thigh, she 842 585 833 585

593 591 from the first millet of the year—a pretty custom known as *pathow kwa*, honouring with porridge.

All are equally anxious for a child to be born, the husband and wife because they want a son and the wife's parents and kin because they cannot, without risking ●842 complications, dispose of the cattle of the marriage till a first-born completes the union. Those whose daughters they might wish to marry would not be happy about accepting such cattle as bridewealth in case they had suddenly to be returned to the husband. 591 When a child is born the mother remains with her parents till she has weaned it. This is a suitable regulation, because after the bridewealth has been paid the husband's father is likely to be short of lactating cows, while the wife's parents will have plenty of milk from their herd. If, for some reason, the wife goes to live with her husband 862 before the child is weaned, it may not be weaned without the consent of her parents, 602 and I have seen a husband pay several cattle to stone for contravention of this rule. A *kwa*, first child, belongs to the home of his maternal grandparents and if he is 603 weaned in his father's home he returns to live with them, a boy till he is initiated and 858 a girl till she is betrothed. This is the rule, though there is variation in practice, depending on the ability of the maternal grandparents to support the child and on the relations between them and their son-in-law.

852 Shortly after the birth of her first-born the wife, now called *pai dap*, a nursing 591 mother, brings the baby to her husband's home and lays him in the ashes of the hearth in the centre of his grandfather's byre, a rite known as *nueg puka*, the bringing to the [273] ashes. Beer has been prepared and is drunk by a few senior kinsmen of the husband who live in his hamlet. It is a domestic, and not a public, ceremony. The wife spends a few days in her husband's home and returns with the child to the village of her parents. She has as yet no hut of her own in her husband's homestead.

591 When his first-born has been weaned the husband builds his wife a hut in his father's homestead facing the family kraal. He then goes to ask his parents-in-law for his 585 wife. They do not deny him, even if, as is likely, some of the bridewealth cattle are still owing. They give her a horn spoon and a gourd and she takes these with her to her husband's home. The gift of a spoon is emphasized by the Nuer in speaking of marriage, because it is a recognition that the woman is now, in the full sense, a wife, who will eat of the porridge of her own gardens with the milk of her own herd. She now milks her husband's cows instead of her father's and hoes the gardens of his home and not those of her childhood. Before she is given a spoon, even if she [illegible] may live at her husband's home and cultivate in her father's village, if it is not far. It is only when a man's bride has borne him a child and tends his hearth that she becomes, in the Nuer sense, his wife. She then makes a *kaar*, a mud fire-screen, and the spirit of his lineage comes to dwell there. Later his father tells him to build a byre and gives him a few cows to start a herd.

The marriage has thus reached completion through many stages: betrothal ceremony, wedding ceremony, consummation ceremony, the birth of a child, the [606] bringing of the first-born to his father's byre, and the presentation to the wife of a spoon as a sign of her domestic separation from her family. She comes to her husband's home not as a wife but as a mother whose breasts have suckled a child of their lineage.

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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the former consists of a man who is both *pater* and *genitor*, a wife, and the children born of that wife, while the latter consists of a 'ghostly husband', who is the *pater* and legal husband, a vicarious husband who is the *genitor*, a wife and the children borne by her. 588

Since mortality among males is high[1] 'ghost-marriage' is extremely common and, in an analysis of the marital unions of Nuer, will be found nearly, if not quite, as common as simple legal marriage.

Categories of Persons on whose behalf 'Ghost-Marriages' are made

(1) As a general rule, the system is not usually carried back more than one generation. A man would not marry a wife for his grandfather or grand-uncle. It was the duty of his father or uncles to do so.

(2) Kinsmen for whom a wife may be married are: brothers, paternal uncles, maternal uncles, and fathers.[2] The system, except in the case of brothers, is not usually reversible. That is to say, a man would not marry a wife to the name of his son because he would then assume the status of both husband and father-in-law to the wife, which would be incestuous. A man may marry his maternal uncle a wife, but a maternal uncle would not marry his sister's son a wife.

(3) Only kinsmen are expected to marry a wife to the name of a dead man.

(4) In exceptional cases a wife is married to the name of a female relative, but usually only in the case of barren women, who are counted as men and provide a link in the paternal line. 588 842

(5) An old woman, especially if she has no paternal relatives living and has the cattle required, will marry a woman to the name of one of them in order to reopen the line. She will invite some unrelated male to act as husband and as *genitor* of the children. In this case the legal husband will be the dead kinsman, whose interests will be guarded by the woman. Sometimes a woman will marry a wife to the name of her dead husband if she has no children and is herself beyond the age of child-bearing. She will do this if she has cattle which are legally the property of her dead husband and there are no heirs in the paternal line to whom they would normally pass.

(6) Sometimes an old man, or one who is impotent, will marry a wife to himself and invite another man to act as *genitor*. This is not

[1] The rule applies also to males who die even before they reach marriageable age. An infant is sometimes regarded as a personality in the lineage structure, but not usually before it has cut its second teeth. If it dies before that event, it may be buried without the normal mortuary ceremonies, in which case its name will not continue. After that age it is of more significance in the lineage and 'ghost-wives' are sometimes married to the names of small boys, but usually in a later generation when the boy (whose age on death is no longer remembered) becomes a paternal uncle.

[2] A son will sometimes marry a wife to the name of his father if it is considered that his father had insufficient male issue.

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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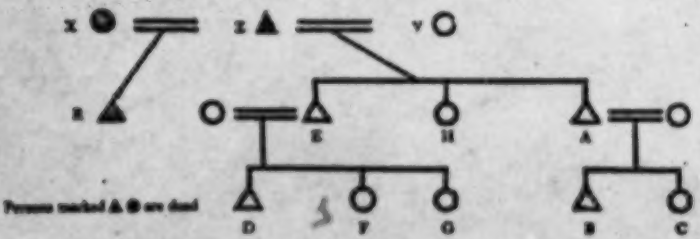
588 842 'ghost-marriage', because the legal husband is still living, but the functions of the *pater* and the *genitor* are similar to those found in 'ghost-marriage'.

'Ghost-Marriage' and Bridewealth

588 Although 'ghost-marriage' is an obligation of kinship, it is obvious that not all men who die without issue are honoured in this fashion. There are too many considerations to make generalization possible, but it seems that the first consideration is the configuration of the lineage. If it is ill-balanced and there are many categories of relatives who simply do not exist, this must be remedied. It is ill-balanced if, for example, a man has no half-brothers or uterine brothers or persons who will be paternal uncles to his children. This links with the second consideration, which is the number of cattle available for bridewealth, for in many cases a man will, on the marriage of a daughter of the house, receive portions which should have gone to some recognized kinsman who is dead or never existed. This will be more easily understood when the principles which govern the distribution of bridewealth have been mastered. The reader should refer to Section 5 of this chapter. For example:



A's father, Z, had two sons E and A by his wife Y. He had one son R by his other wife X. R died without issue. R could have claimed cattle on the marriage of his half-sister H (as *deman kui gwande*: paternal half-brother), and he might have expected at least some of the cattle which went to his father Z in this marriage (the *ghok gwande*: father's cattle) because it is usual for the major part of this portion of bridewealth to go to the bride's half-brother, i.e. brother by another mother. Again, on the marriages of F, G, and C, he (or his heirs if he had any) might expect the portions called *ghok gwanden gwande*, 'the cattle of the father's brother by another mother'. Since R is dead and has no heirs, all these cattle must go to A and his brother E or their heirs. They have therefore obtained a number of cattle which would not otherwise have been at their disposal, and one of them, assisted by the other, will marry a wife to Z, their father, so that there will eventually be a collateral lineage descending from him

11:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1945
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588 A man is content to pay a fee to obtain possession of any children he may
581 beget by an older woman. Nuer also often speak of a girl who has had a child by a youth who states that he is willing to marry her as soon as he has sufficient cattle, as a *kea*, but no one would refer to her as such once the ritual of marriage has been performed.

588 We may speak of a man, the unmarried woman with whom he lives, and the children born of the woman and begotten and legitimatized by the man as a simple natural family. The family which springs from widow-concubinage is a complex group in that all the members except the widow's mate are members of a different and legal family as well as members of the natural family, for the genitor can never pay a fee to legitimatize his natural children. When a man begets children by an unmarried woman there is no legal family in opposition to the natural family so that the position of genitor in relation to his children is much more secure. Although the woman is not married to the man we cannot deny the word "family" to this group because its members live together as a household on the pattern of the legal family, at any rate for some years. If the woman leaves him the position of the man is equivalent to that of a man whose wife has been divorced and whose bride-cattle have been returned except those left with her kin to legitimatize the children.

V

848 It is clear from what I have already recorded that Nuer do not attach
842 great importance to physiological paternity and that they are far from regarding bastardy with repugnance. Men prefer to beget their own sons but it is not ignominious to nurture children begotten by others. Nuer pay little regard to the manner of begetting so long as the legal parentage of the child is well established. Nevertheless, the links between a genitor and the child he has begotten is not a purely physiological one, even when the genitor is neither pater nor foster-father. The act of begetting creates a social relationship between genitor and natural son and they are bound to one another by a mystical tie. This relationship will be better understood later but it may shortly be illustrated here by a few remarks about adultery (*dhom*).

837 Yet another union which may result in the birth of a child is adulterous congress with a woman during the lifetime of her husband (or of her mate in ghost-marriage or leviritic marriage). Coming from a people (the Azande of the Nile-Congo divide) where adultery cases are very common at the present day, I was at once struck with the absence of cases, quarrelling, and even talk about the subject in Nuerland. Nevertheless, I believe that adultery is frequent both with married women who are travelling a long way from their homes and with women in their husband's villages. Nuer have often described to me how they have committed adultery and were not the least ashamed to talk to me about their adventures. They treat the matter light-heartedly. If you are caught in the act you may be speared or clubbed but if you are not caught in the act you can compensate the injured husband. They do not speak of adultery as though it was a highly immoral act but only as a risky and possibly expen-

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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774 and is not an integral part of him. They do not attach any impor-
[196] tance to it and there are no beliefs and practices connected with it. They presumably see an analogy between a man's shadow and his soul, the shadow being the best way they can find to figure the sort of thing the soul might be. The analogy may derive from the idea of ghosts being shadowy replicas of the living. The fact that other creatures and things have shadows does not lead Nuer to say that they have souls; and since they have no souls, in their case the shadow does not at any time have a figurative meaning.

Nuer hold no decided opinions about the nature of the soul, which does not surprise us in view of their lack of interest in what happens after death, or of how there comes to be one. They know
[842] that the foetus begins as a result of the male sperm entering into the womb. The child is begotten (*dieth*) by man. But it is also created (*cak*) by God, so it appears that they think of conception as a product of this combination of human and divine action. But it does not necessarily follow that because a man is alive he has a soul. Gatbuogh was alive. So when we observe that Nuer
[858] do not mourn or hold a mortuary ceremony for a dead child, it suggests to us that either they do not think of a small child as having a soul or they regard it as immature. It is only when he begins to take part in activities of the social life that he is said to be a person (*ran*), and Nuer sometimes indicate that the sign of having become a person is the removal of the second lower incisor teeth, which is done when the child is about seven or eight years of age. On the other hand they speak of infant twins having one soul. Clearly they hold no definite opinion about the matter.

774 Though Nuer would not themselves bring the ideas of flesh,
828 life, and soul so neatly together, we can see that taken together they are covered by the concepts of both *pwony* and *ran*. *Pwony* means the whole creature, the individual or the self, what is one man and not another. '*Pwonyda*' is 'myself' and '*pwonyda pany*' is 'my very self'. *Ran* is what we may describe as 'the person', the social being as distinct from the individual creature. Its plural form *nath* is the word Nuer use to distinguish themselves from other peoples. They are *nei ti nath*, people (in the general sense of the word) who are people (in the sense of persons as Nuer think of themselves). *Pwony* is, as it were, the total organism, *ran* the total personality. As I have explained, a small child is the one but not

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775 As Nuer speak about *cien* it has, therefore, the sense of an
626 injustice crying out for vengeance. The essence of the concept is the notion of a wrong unrighted, of a grievance which demands, and rightly demands, redress. Even a living man who has no other way of getting justice may say to the man who has wronged him '*ba ji cien*', 'I will haunt you', meaning that though he cannot get justice now he will get it after he is dead. Nuer say that he may express this threat not in words but by looks. As in the case of the *biit*, so with the *cien*, it is God who makes the ghostly vengeance to work. Nuer say that the wronged ghost exacts vengeance by making his cause known to God, who sooner or later punishes the wrongdoer.

753 The moral action of *biit* and *cien*, which have a similarity to certain ideas of sin discussed in the next chapter, is in this respect very different for Nuer from the exercise of psychical and physical powers which have no moral foundation and are therefore not thought to involve divine judgement and intervention and are only thought of in connexion with Spirit, if at all, so far as all that happens in the world can ultimately be said to happen because God allows it and can be appealed to to change the course of
[843] events. I refer to the evil eye (*peth*); ghouls (*roth*); the danger of pregnant women (*ther*) and to a lesser extent of their husbands,
[177] an idea some of the eastern Nuer have taken over from the Anuak;
[841] the danger of women who commence menstruation in the dry season month of *pet* (*koc mai*); the danger of a child after two or three of its elder brothers and sisters have died at, or shortly after,
● [842] birth (*jul*); monorchids (*tor*), a child conceived while its mother is still suckling (*mok*); and menstruation, which is dangerous for the cattle—no woman may drink their milk at this time. If Nuer are in danger from any of these influences they may pray and sacrifice to God, but if they do so their prayers and sacrifices are mixed up with all sorts of other and different sets of ideas and they deal with the situation mainly by magical rites which would be both inappropriate and ineffective where Spirit is concerned. They therefore cannot properly be included under the rubric of religion and so lie outside the scope of this book. They are mentioned only in order that their relative unimportance may be emphasized. That in itself is of significance. Perspective would be lost were it not understood.

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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it is cut in two laterally across the belly (*ngok*). This is done at ceremonies in honour of a *colwic* spirit, and also in rites performed to avoid misfortune coming to a man whose wife has been unfaithful or who takes a widow in leviratic marriage. 782

In sacrifices to spirits associated with rivers and streams and with creatures which live in them (generally the crocodile), and also sometimes in a sacrifice to God for rain, the victim—a sheep or goat, not an ox—may be bound and pushed under the water among the reeds and weeds. When sacrifice is made to the python-spirit the victim is suffocated. The openings of its body are stuffed with grass and it is jumped on and pummelled to death. In practice it is assumed to be dead at an early stage and the point of a spear is inserted in its throat to begin the skinning. Nuer regard this as a Dinka mode of sacrifice, as indeed it is, contrasting suffocation with *yiedh*, stabbing with the spear, their own normal mode of sacrificing oxen. [177]

I have not seen a sacrifice to the python-spirit, but I have seen an ox suffocated in a different and rare ceremony. I think that perhaps what I witnessed should not be regarded as a sacrifice at all, at any rate in the usual sense, for the beast does not seem to have been consecrated and there was no invocation. It has more the appearance of what we might better describe as a magical rite, almost certainly of Dinka origin. I feel nevertheless that, as it was the only occasion I saw a killing by suffocation, I should give a brief description of it. When a girl is espoused early in life, probably before the commencement of the menses, the premature payment of bridewealth may cause her to be barren unless a special ceremony is performed. In western Nuerland, where I saw it, it is called *gorot*.[1] I believe that in eastern Nuerland a rather different ceremony is performed. On the occasion when I was present it took place in the girl's home after her marriage had been consummated. An ox was thrown and its forelegs and back legs tied in pairs. It was then slowly suffocated, grass being first pushed up its anus with a stick, and then into its mouth and nostrils (Plate III). During its sufferings the husband and a youth of his age-set, the wife and a maiden of about her age, and a small boy and a small [842]

[1] J. Kiggen (op. cit., pp. 108 and 117) gives this word as the name of a different ceremony, for a woman without children who has smallpox. He says that a small gourd is opened, beer is poured into it, it is rubbed over the woman, and a goat is killed. The rite I describe is probably his *guur*, the meaning of which he gives as 'animal sacrifice to the Dinka god'.